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The Holy Myrrh-bearing Women

And very early in the morning,
the first day of the week, (the women)
came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.
St. Mark 16:2

THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN prepared myrrh with which to anoint the Body of Christ.

They did not succeed in doing this, since before they came to the tomb Christ had risen from the dead.

Nonetheless their sacrifice was accepted by the Lord, since He looks on the hearts of men and accepts the intent as if done, if it could not be fulfilled in spite of every eagerness and attempt.

Their merciful intent pleased God, is sung on the day of the Holy Myrrh-bearing Women (2nd Sedalen of Sunday Matins).

For the Lord is merciful, and accepts the deeds, and embraces the intent, and honors the execution, and praises the offering (Paschal Sermon of St. John Chrysostom).

There were, however, myrrh-bearing women who not only in intent, but also in very deed, anointed Christ with myrrh, and they did this before the days of His suffering.

These were Mary, the sister of Lazarus; the woman who anointed Christ during the supper at the home of Simon the Pharisee; and the woman who anointed Christ two days before His death on the Cross.

Concerning the last of these, the Lord said plainly that she was preparing His Body for burial, and that this would be announced in all the world, wherever the Gospel would be preached.

Thus the Lord accepted the "merciful intent" of the Myrrh-bearing Women, who loved Christ with all their heart, who had followed Him every moment from Galilee and had not left him even at the time of the Crucifixion; likewise He accepted the anointing of His feet with myrrh

[*Continued on page 120*]

+ Archbishop John Maximovitch

Archbishop John Maximovitch
Shanghai, 1941

THE ZHIROVITSKAYA MOTHER OF GOD

Commemorated May 7

TROPARION, TONE 2

DESPISE NOT those who demand help from Thee, O Sovereign Lady,* and the abyss of mercifulness open to all who hasten to Thy health-giving Icon.* Assuage the sorrows of our life, O All-bountiful One,* and from this vale of tears conduct Thy faithful to eternal joy.*

For in Thee have we all acquired hope and assurance,* O Fount of mercy, Protection, and Salvation of our souls.

THE MIRACULOUS ICONS
OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

THE ZHIROVITSKAYA
MOTHER OF GOD

By E. POSELYANIN[1]

THE REVELATION of this wonderworking Icon occurred in 1470 in a forest belonging to the Orthodox Lithuanian lord Alexander Soltan, near the town of Zhirovits in the Province of Grodno. Some shepherds of this place saw an unusually bright light penetrating through the branches of a pear tree which stood on a brook below a mountain. Such an extraordinary apparition aroused the shepherds' curiosity. They went closer and saw in the tree a small Icon of the Mother of God in a radiant aureole. The strong light and a pious fear which possessed them at the sight of this Icon did not allow them to approach the Icon itself for a long time. But then the light coming from the Icon gradually faded away. Having bowed down before the image of the Mother of God, the shepherds took it from the tree and brought it to their lord Alexander Soltan, who at that time occupied the position of Treasurer. Alexander did not give particular credence to the shepherds' story, but nonetheless he took the Icon and locked it up in a chest.

On the following day Soltan had guests. Speaking with them, the host among other things told them also of the Icon of the Mother of God that had been found by the shepherds. The guests became interested in the discovery and expressed a desire to look at it. Alexander went to get it, but it was not to be found in the chest. This amazed him exceedingly, for not long before this he had seen it in that very place.

In a short time these same shepherds of Zhirovits again found this Icon of the Mother of God in the same place, and for the second time they brought it to Alexander Soltan. This time he behaved with

1. From *The Mother of God*, St. Petersburg, n.d.

greater piety toward the holy image than before. He considered himself unworthy for the Icon to remain in his house, and he gave a vow to erect on the place of its appearance a church in the name of the Most Holy Mother of God.

Soltan fulfilled his vow and built a wooden church, around which a settlement soon appeared and a parish was formed. Until the year 1560 the holy Icon remained in this church. But then a fire occurred, and the church was completely burned, despite all the efforts of the local inhabitants to stop the fire. Attempts were also made to save the holy Icon of the Mother of God from the flames, but these were in vain. Everyone thought that the Icon had perished, and all were heartbroken over the loss. The Icon of the Mother of God, however, was soon discovered in a miraculous fashion.

Once some peasant children, returning home after school, approached the mountain at whose foot had stood the church that had burned down. Here a wondrous apparition presented itself to their glance: a certain Virgin of extraordinary beauty sat on a stone in a radiant aureole. The children did not dare approach Her, but hurried home to inform their relatives and friends of what they had seen. The account of the apparition reached the priest also. Everyone accepted the children's story as a Divine revelation and set out for the mountain. When they approached the stone, they noticed a burning candle on it, and when they came closer to it they found on it the Zhirovitskaya Icon of the Mother of God, not in the least injured from the fire. The priest and inhabitants of Zhirovits were overjoyed at the discovery of their lost holy object. Since they had no parish church, the Icon was placed for a time in the priest's house. Then the parishioners undertook the building of a new stone church. When it was finished, it was consecrated in honor of the Mother of God and the wonderworking Icon was placed in it.

Many years after the events described here, a monastery arose around this church, having as its aim the spreading of Orthodox religious enlightenment in that region and battling against the Unia and Latinism. The brotherhood founded in the monastery zealously fulfilled these aims in word and deed. The monks not only gave themselves over to the work of enlightenment among the people, but they themselves also led a strict ascetic life. Unfortunately, their activity was quickly forced to cease. In 1613 the monastery was seized by the Uniates and was in their hands until 1839. At that time, too, the Zhirovitskaya Icon

of the Mother of God passed into the possession of the Uniates, who, however, behaved toward it with due respect and piety. Even the Poles revered it. In 1839 the Zhirovitsky Monastery and the wonderworking image of the Mother of God were returned to the Orthodox.

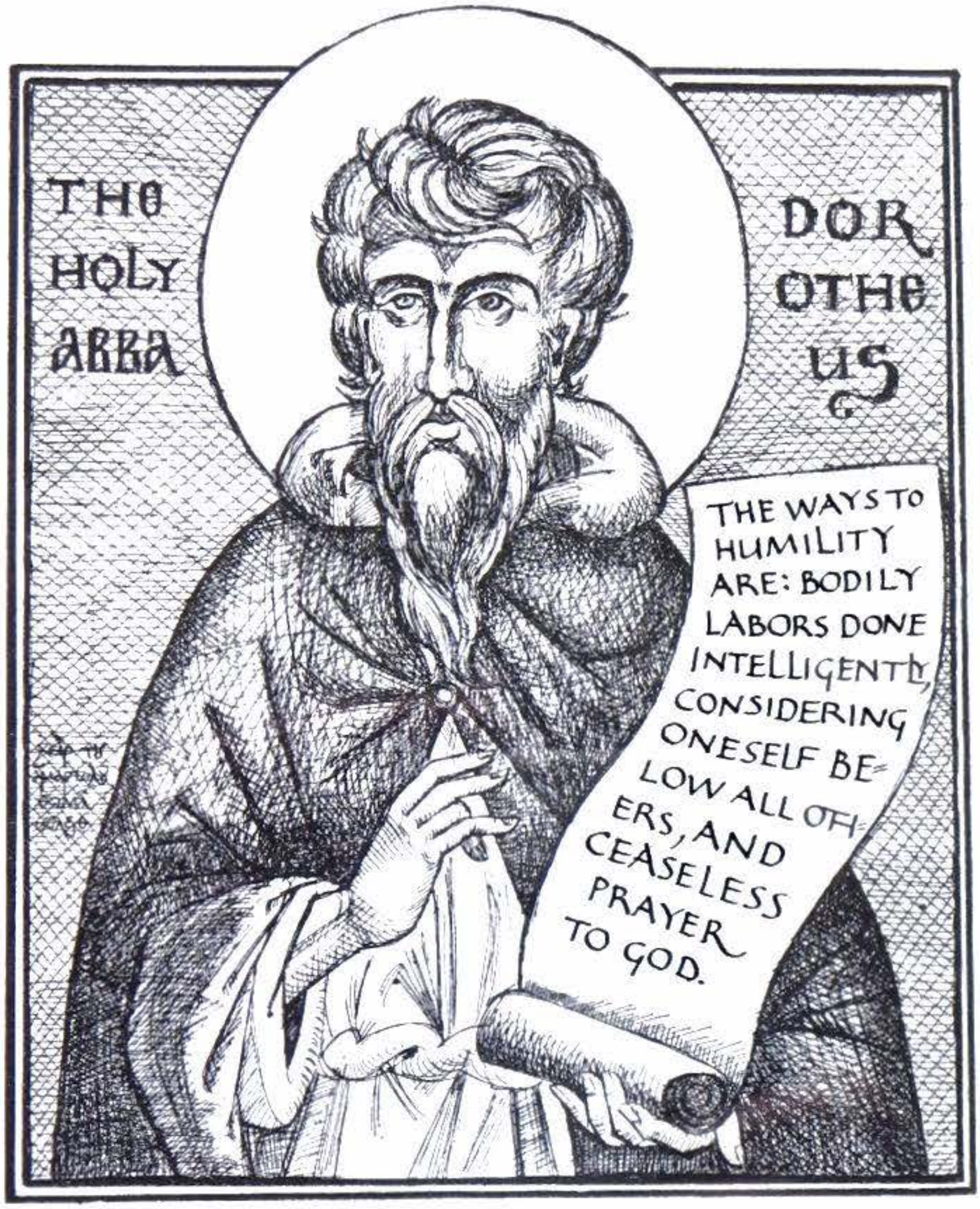
The Zhirovitskaya Icon is represented in relief in jasper stone, and it is not large in size. It is to be found today on the iconostasis on the left side of the royal doors in the chief monastery church of the Dormition, which was built on the site of its first appearance. The faithful, in coming to venerate the holy Icon, have the custom of providing themselves with water from the spring near which the Zhirovitskaya Icon appeared the first time. Today this spring is underneath the church of the Dormition in a vault. Besides water, the faithful likewise take pieces of the stone on which the Icon of the Mother of God appeared the third time. This stone, distinguished by its large size and bearing the name "the footstep of the Mother of God," is under the altar of one of the monastery churches.

Editors' Note

THE ZHIROVITSKY Monastery with its Icon, exactly like the nearby Pochaev Monastery with its wonderworking Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God, has today for the second time become a major front in the Russian people's battle to preserve their Orthodoxy. As once against the Latin Unia, so today they stand firmly against Communist persecution. The contemporary situation of Pochaev Monastery has become known in the West through the Open Letters which its pilgrims have sent to the West (see *The Orthodox Word*, 1965, no. 3, pp. 105ff). In some of these letters, something of the situation of Zhirovitsky Monastery is also revealed. "On the 20th of May, new style, 1963, was the feast of the church in the village of Zhirovits -- the Appearance of the Zhirovitskaya Icon of the Mother of God. For the feast many believers gathered from all parts of Russia, but the district officials came and prohibited the service" (*Ibid.*, p. 107). In another letter (Russian text in *Possev*, Jan. 7, 1965), the "pilgrims and parishioners of Zhirovitsky Monastery" describe the attempt of the Communists to close the Monastery and beg the Orthodox Patriarchs to intercede for the Monastery.

The Zhirovitsky Monastery was still open in 1968, and since 1965 it has been the place of the forced "retirement" of Archbishop Germogen, who has refused to be the willing puppet of the Communist authorities in their relentless effort to destroy Orthodoxy.

Most Holy Mother of God, save the Orthodox Christian people!


THE HOLY ABBA
DOR OTHE US
THE WAYS TO HUMILITY ARE: BODILY LABORS DONE INTELLIGENTLY, CONSIDERING ONESELF BELOW ALL OTHERS, AND CEASELESS PRAYER TO GOD.

Icon by Thomas Drain

ST. ABBA DOROTHEUS

Reposed c. 620

Commemorated June 5

TROPARION, TONE 8

BY THE FLOW of thy tears thou hast cultivated the barren desert,* and from the depth of thy sighing thou hast brought forth a hundredfold of fruitful works,* thou wast a universal enlightener, glowing bright with miracles, O Dorotheus our father,* Pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.

The Life of

ST. ABBA DOROTHEUS

The writings of Abba Dorotheus constitute an "ABC of monasticism," setting forth the path of Christian spiritual life from its first steps to its perfection in purity and passionlessness. A full Life of this Father does not exist; the following account, taken mainly from his own writings, was first presented as an introduction to the Russian translation of his writings.[1]

ABBA DOROTHEUS lived at about the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th centuries, although we have no means to determine the precise date of his birth and death. His teacher, the Elder Barsanuphius, was still alive about the year 590, when Evagrius wrote his Church history.

His early youth was spent in diligent study of the secular sciences. This is apparent from his own words (at the beginning of his Tenth Instruction), when he says of himself: "When I was studying secular sciences, they seemed to me at first extremely difficult, and when I would come to take a book, I would be in the same state as a man about to touch a wild beast; but when I continued to force myself, God helped me, and diligence became in me such a habit that from zeal for reading I would not notice what I ate or drank or how I slept. And I never allowed myself to be enticed to dinner by any of my friends, and I did not even enter into conversation with them while I was reading, although I was sociable and loved my comrades. When the philosopher would let us go, I would wash myself with water, for I became dry from immoderate reading and had need to refresh myself with water every day; coming home, I ate what I found prepared, having a book also beside me on the couch, and often I would become absorbed in it. Likewise at the time of sleeping it would be beside me on my table, and having fallen asleep for a little, I would suddenly jump up in order to continue reading.

1. Edition of Optina Monastery, ninth printing, 1904.

Again in the evening, when I would return home, after Vespers, I would light a lamp and continue reading to midnight, and in general I was in such a state that from reading I knew not at all the sweetness of repose."

Studying with such zeal and eagerness, St. Dorotheus acquired a broad knowledge and developed in himself a natural gift with words, as is recalled by the unknown writer of a letter concerning his book of Instructions, who said that the Saint "was great in the gift of words" and, like a wise bee flying from flower to flower, gathered what was useful from the works of worldly philosophers and offered it in his Instructions for the general edification. Perhaps in this instance also the Saint followed the example of St. Basil the Great, whose Rules he studied and strove to fulfill in actual deed. From the Instructions of St. Dorotheus and his questions to the holy Elders it is clearly apparent that he knew well the works of pagan writers, but incomparably better he knew the writings of the holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church: Sts. Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Clement of Alexandria, and many illustrious ascetics of the first Christian centuries; and his living together with the great Elders and his labors in asceticism enriched him with practical knowledge, of which his Instructions testify.

Although we do not know anything of the Saint's background, from his conversations with the great Elders it is apparent that he was well-to-do, and that even before entering monasticism he made use of the instructions of the illustrious ascetics, Sts Barsanuphius and John. This is shown by the reply which St. John gave him to a question regarding the distribution of one's property: "Brother! To your first questions I replied as to one still in need of milk. But now, when you speak of complete renunciation of the world, listen attentively, according to the word of Scripture: *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it* (Ps. 80: 10). From this it is clear that St. John gave him advice before his complete renunciation of the world. Unfortunately, not all these soul-benefiting words of the holy elders have come down to us; we have only those which have been preserved in the book of Replies of Sts. Barsanuphius and John.

WE DO NOT KNOW what inspired St. Dorotheus to leave the world, but, examining his Instructions and in particular his questions to the holy Elders, one may conclude that he left the world with only one thing in mind – to attain the Evangelic perfection through fulfilling the commandments of God. He himself speaks of holy men in his first Instruction: "They understood that, being in the world, they could not

easily perform virtues, and they desired for themselves a special form of life, a special form of activity -- I speak of the monastic life -- and they began to flee from the world and live in deserts."

Most likely a beneficent influence on the Saint's resolution was exercised by the conversations of the holy Elders; for in entering the monastery of St. Seridos, Dorotheus immediately gave himself over to absolute obedience to St. John the Prophet, so that he allowed himself to do nothing without consulting him. "When I was living in coenobitism," says the Saint of himself, "I revealed all my thoughts to the Elder, Abba John, and never, as I have said, did I decide to do anything without consulting him. Sometimes a thought would tell me: won't the elder tell you the same thing? Why do you want to disturb him? But I replied to the thought: anathema to you, and to your reasoning, and to your reason, and to your sophistry, and to your knowledge, for what you know you know from demons. And so I went and asked the Elder. And it happened sometimes that he answered me the same thing that had been in my mind. Then the thought would say to me: well? You see it's the same thing I told you: didn't you disturb the Elder for nothing? But I answered the thought: now it is good, now it is from the Holy Spirit; but your suggestion was evil, from the demons, and it was the doing of a passionate state of the soul. And thus I never allowed myself to obey my own thought without having asked the Elder."

Remembrance of the great diligence with which he had studied secular sciences inspired St. Dorotheus also to labors of virtue. "When I entered the monastery," he writes in his tenth Instruction, "I said to myself: if in studying secular sciences such a desire was born in me and such fervor from occupying myself with reading, and it became a habit with me, then how much more will it be so in the studying of virtue; and from this example I drew much strength and eagerness."

A picture of his inner life and his success under the guidance of the Elders is revealed to us in part from his questions to his spiritual fathers and instructors in piety; and in his Instructions we find several cases that testify how he forced himself to virtue and how he succeeded in this. Always accusing himself, he strove to hide the defects of his neighbors with love, and their offenses with regard to him he ascribed to temptation or to a simplicity that had no evil intentions. Thus in his fourth Instruction the Saint cites several examples from which it is clear that, being strongly offended, he patiently bore this, and living for nine years in the coenobitic life, as he himself says, he said no offending word to anyone.

The obedience assigned to him by Abbot Seridos consisted in receiving and giving comfort to visitors, and here more than once was shown his great patience and his eagerness to serve God and his neighbors. "When I was living in coenobitism," St. Dorotheus says of himself, "the Abbot, at the advice of the Elders, made me the receiver of visitors, while not long before this I had had a severe illness. And thus it happened that visitors would come in the evening and I would spend the evening with them; then camel-drivers would come, and I would serve them; and often after I had gone to sleep, another need would arise, and they would wake me up, and meanwhile the hour of the Vigil would also be approaching. Hardly would I have fallen asleep when the canonarch would wake me up; but from labor or from illness I would be exhausted, and sleep would again take such possession of me that, weakened by fever, I would not remember myself and would answer through sleep: "Very well, my lord, may God remember your love and reward you; you have commanded, I will come, O lord." Then, when he went out, I would again fall asleep and be very sad that I was late in going to church. And since the canonarch couldn't wait for me, I begged two brethren, one to wake me up, and the other not to let me doze at the Vigil; and believe me, brethren, I revered them as if through them my salvation was accomplished, and maintained toward them great piety."

LABORING THUS in asceticism, St. Dorotheus attained a high level of spiritual maturity, and being made head of the infirmary which his brother had established in the monastery of Abbot Seridos, he served for all as a profitable example of love of neighbor, and at the same time treated the wounds and infirmities of the souls of the brethren. His profound humility was expressed in the very words with which he speaks of this in his eleventh Instruction. "When I lived in coenobitism, I do not know how it was that the brethren went astray concerning me and confessed to me their thoughts, and the Abbot at the advice of the Elders commanded me to take this concern upon myself." Under his guidance that simple-hearted performer of obedience, Dositheus, also came to flourish in such a short time [see below].

Having as his instructor from his very entrance into the monastery St. John the Prophet, St. Dorotheus received instruction from him as from the mouth of God, and considered himself fortunate that in his abode in coenobitic life he was honored to serve him, as he himself

speaks of this in his Instruction on Divine Fear: "When I was still in the monastery of Abba Seridos, it happened that the servant of the Elder, Abba John, the disciple of Abba Barsanuphius, became ill, and the Abba commanded me to serve the Elder. And I kissed the very doors of his cell from outside with the same feeling with which someone else might bow down to the honorable Cross, and all the more was I happy to serve him." Imitating in everything the examples of the holy ascetics, and fulfilling in deed the grace-giving instructions of his fathers -- Barsanuphius the Great, John, and Abbot Seridos -- St. Dorotheus was undoubtedly also the heir of their spiritual gifts. For Divine Providence did not leave him under a bushel of obscurity, but placed him on the lampstand of leadership -- and all the while he desired solitude and silence, as is apparent from his questions to the Elders.

After the death of Abba Seridos and St. John the Prophet, when their common preceptor Barsanuphius the Great shut himself up completely in his cell, St. Dorotheus left the coenobia of Abba Seridos and was an abbot. Most likely it is to this time that are to be dated the Instructions which he spoke to his disciples; these Instructions (21 in number) and several epistles constitute all that remains to us as an inheritance from the writings of the Saint, although the light of his teaching spread not only to monasteries but in the world, too; for many, drawn by the glory of his ascetic labors and his virtues, hastened to him for advice and instruction, as is witnessed by the anonymous writer of the letter in which is contained the life of Dositheus. He says that the Saint, in accord with the gifts given him by God, fulfilled his holy and peace-bearing service equally toward rich and poor, wise and ignorant, women and men, old and young, sorrowing and rejoicing, strangers and friends, laymen and monks, rulers and subjects, slaves and free: he was constantly everything to everyone and gained very many.

Very unfortunately, a complete biography of this great ascetic has not come down to us; without doubt it would have been most edifying. Having selected from his own writings that little that we have now presented to the reader, we do not consider it superfluous to add to this the testimony also of St. Theodore the Studite concerning the authenticity and purity of the writings of St. Dorotheus. In his testament St. Theodore speaks thus: "I accept every God-inspired book of the Old and New Testaments, and likewise the lives and divine writings of all the God-bearing fathers, teachers, and ascetics. I say this for the sake of the noxious Pamphilus, who, coming from the East, slandered these

Sts. Barsanuphius and John, the Elders of the Monastery of Abba Seridos. Their Answers to various questions on the spiritual life are included in the Philokalia.

venerable fathers, that is, Mark, Isaiah, Barsanuphius, Dorotheus, and Hesychius; not that Barsanuphius and that Dorotheus who were one in thought with the Acephalites and the so-called Decacerates and were for this given over to anathema by St. Sophronius in his book, for they are completely distinct from those I mentioned above, whom I, according to the tradition of the Fathers, accept, having inquired concerning this of the Most Holy ruling Patriarch Tarasius and other worthy Eastern Fathers; yea, and in the teachings of the above-mentioned Fathers I not only found not a trace of impiety, but on the contrary much spiritual profit." Another ancient writer, Nilos, also testifies in accordance with this. His words were printed in the form of a foreword to the book of Instructions of St. Abba Dorotheus, in the Greek original and in the Slavonic translation of it. "Let it be known," he says, "concerning this soul-benefiting book, that there were two Dorothei and two Barsanuphii: the ones who opposed the teaching of Severus, and the others who were in everything orthodox and attained perfection in ascetic labors. It is these latter who are mentioned in the present book, and therefore we accept it with love as the work of this Abba Dorotheus who is blessed and most glorious among the Fathers."

Some of the Instructions on spiritual life of the holy Abba Dorotheus are to be found in the Philokalia (*English translation in* Early Fathers from the Philokalia, *pp. 149ff*). *A marvellous fruit of these Instructions may be seen in the life of the disciple of Abba Dorotheus, St. Dositheus. The account that follows, included as a part of the Russian edition of the writings of Abba Dorotheus, is by an anonymous writer apparently contemporary with the two saints, and is an inseparable part of the life of the great Abba himself.*

The Life of

Dositheus,

THE DISCIPLE OF ABBA DOROTHEUS

ABBA DOROTHEUS, in truth blessed, having come to love the monastic life according to God, went away to the coenobia of Father Seridos, where he found many great ascetics living in silence, of whom surpassing all were the two great Elders, St. Barsanuphius and his disciple and co-ascetic, Abba John, called the Prophet from his gift of clairvoyance which he possessed from God. To them St. Dorotheus gave himself over in obedience with complete confidence and spoke with the great Elder (Barsanuphius) through the holy Father Seridos; but Father John the Prophet he was honored also to serve. The above-mentioned holy Elders found it necessary for St. Dorotheus to establish an infirmary; and having settled there, he himself had the care of it, for the brethren were very sad that when they fell ill they had no one to look after them. And thus, with the help of God, he established an infirmary, on the means of his own brother, who provided him with everything necessary for establishing it, for he was a man very Christ-loving, who loved monks also. And thus Abba Dorotheus, as I said, with several other pious brethren, served the sick and himself, as head of the infirmary, had supervision over this institution.

Once the abbot, Abba Seridos, sent for him and called him to his quarters. Entering, he found there a certain youth in military dress, quite young and good-looking, who had come then to the monastery together with the people of a prince, whom Father Seridos loved. When Abba Dorotheus entered, Abba Seridos, taking him aside, said to him: "These people have brought this youth to me, saying that he wishes to remain in the monastery and be a monk; but I am afraid that he might belong to some one of the great lords, and if he had stolen something or done something similar and wishes to hide, and we accept him, we will have trouble; for neither his dress, nor his appearance indicate a man who desires to be a monk."

This youth was a relative of a certain general, lived in great indulgence and luxury (for the relatives of such great lords always lived in great indulgence), and had never heard the word of God. Once certain of the general's people spoke in his presence of the holy city (Jerusalem); having heard about it, he conceived the desire to see the holy

things there and begged the general to send him to look at the holy places. The general, not desiring to disappoint him, sought out a close friend of his who was going there, and said to him: "Do me a favor, take this youth with you to look at the holy places." And he, having taken this young man from the general, showed him every honor, looked after him, and offered to let him eat together with himself and his wife.

And thus, having reached the holy city and venerated the holy places, they came also to Gethsemane, where there was a representation of the Last Judgement. And when the youth, stopping before this representation, was beholding it with attention and wonder, he saw a magnificent Woman, clothed in purple, Who stood beside him and explained to him the torture of each of the condemned, and gave at the same time several other instructions of Her own. The youth, hearing this, was amazed and wondered, for, as I have already said, he had never heard either the word of God or that there was to be a judgement. And then he said to Her: "Lady, what must I do to be saved from these tortures?" She answered him: "Fast, do not eat meat, and pray often, and you will be saved from tortures." Having given him these three commandments, the Woman clothed in purple became invisible and appeared no more to him. The youth went over that whole place seeking Her, supposing that it had been an ordinary woman, but did not find Her; for it was Holy Mary, the Mother of God.

From that time forth this youth remained in a state of contrition and preserved the three commandments that had been given him; and the friend of the general, seeing that he was fasting and not eating meat, sorrowed over this for the general, for he knew that the general had a special concern for this youth. The soldiers who were with him, however, seeing that he conducted himself thus, said to him: "Youth! What you are doing is not becoming for a man who wants to live in the world; if you wish to live like this, then go to a monastery and you will save your soul." And he, knowing nothing Divine, neither what such a thing as a monastery was, and only observing what he had heard from that Woman, said to them: "Lead me wherever you know, for I do not know where to go." Several of them, as I have said, were beloved of the Abba Seridos, and, coming to the monastery, they brought this youth with them.

And when the Abba sent the blessed Dorotheus to speak with him, Abba Dorotheus tested him and found that the youth could say

THE LIFE OF ST. DOSITHEUS

Commemorated February 19

Top: Dositheus begs Abba Seridos to accept him in the monastery; he is tonsured. Middle: Dositheus attends the sick; he weeps over his sins. Bottom: the blessed repose of Dositheus.

nothing else to him but only "I wish to be saved." Then he came and said to the Abba: "If you are pleased to accept him, fear nothing, for in him there is nothing evil." The Abba said to him: "Do me a favor: take him yourself for his salvation, for I do not wish him to be amidst the brethren." Abba Dorotheus in his piety for a long time refused, saying: "It is beyond my strength to take upon myself someone else's burden, and this is not within my means." The Abba replied to him: "I bear both your burden and his; over what, then, do you grieve?" Then the blessed Dorotheus said to him: "If you have decided thus, then inform the Elder (Barsanuphius) of this, if it please you." The Abba replied to him: "Good, I shall tell him." And he went and informed the great Elder of this. And the Elder said to blessed Dorotheus: "Take this youth, for through you God will save him." Then he took him with joy, and placed him with himself in the infirmary. His name was Dositheus.

WHEN THE TIME CAME to eat food, Abba Dorotheus said to him: "Eat until you are full, only tell me how much you eat." He came and said to him: "I ate a loaf and a half of bread, and in a loaf there are three pounds." Abba Dorotheus asked him: "Was this enough for you, Dositheus?" He replied: "Yes, my lord, this was enough for me." The Abba asked him: "Are you not hungry, Dositheus?" He answered him: "No, master, I am not hungry." Then Abba Dorotheus said to him: "Next time eat one loaf, and the other half-loaf divide in half; eat one quarter, and the other quarter divide in two, and eat one half." Dositheus did thus. And when Abba Dorotheus asked him: "Are you hungry, Dositheus?" he replied, "Yes, lord, a little hungry." In a few days he again said to him: "How is it with you, Dositheus, do you continue to feel hungry?" He answered him: "No, lord, by your prayers all is well with me." The Abba said to him: "And thus put aside also the other half of the quarter." And he did this. Again in a few days Abba Dorotheus asked of him: "How is it with you now, Dositheus, are you not hungry?" He replied: "It is well with me, lord." The Abba said to him: "Divide the other quarter also in two, and eat half, and leave half." He did this. And thus with God's help, little by little, from four and a half pounds he stopped at eight ounces. For consumption of food also depends upon habit.

This youth was quiet and skillful in everything he did; he served the sick in the infirmary, and each one was set at ease by his service, for he did everything carefully. If it happened that he took offense against

[*Continued on page 110*]

ST. ABBA DOROTHEUS

16th-century fresco in the refectory of the Monastery of Lavra, Mount Athos

PORTRAIT OF ST SERAPHIM
PAINTED IN 1831 IN SAROV MONASTERY

XL

INSTRUCTION TO A NOVICE

WHETHER BY someone's advice, or by authority of others, or by whatever other means you came to this monastery, do not fall into despondency: this is God's visitation to you. If you observe that which has been told you, you will be saved yourself together with your close ones whom you care for: *I have not seen*, said the Prophet, *the righteous forsaken, nor his seed* (Ps. 36: 25). Living, then, in this monastery, observe this: standing in church, be attentive to everything without neglect, learn the whole order of the Church services, *i.e.*, Vespers, Compline, Nocturns, Matins, the Hours; learn to keep them in the mind.

THE SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

TO LAYMEN AND MONKS

Of Our Father Among the Saints

ST. SERAPHIM OF SAROV

If you are in your cell without any work for the hands, be diligent in all kinds of reading, but above all in the reading of the Psalter; strive to read each section many times, so as to keep all in the mind. If there is work for the hands, occupy yourself with it; if you are called to an obedience, go to it. At handiwork, or being anywhere at an obedience, constantly say the prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. At prayer pay heed to yourself, *i.e.*, gather the mind and unite it with the soul. At the beginning for a day, then for two and many, say this prayer with the mind alone, each time separately, paying particular attention to each word. Then, when the Lord will kindle your heart with the warmth of His grace and will unite it within you into a single spirit: then this prayer will flow within you ceaselessly and will always be with you, delighting and nourishing you. It is this very thing that is spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah: *For the dew from Thee is healing to them* (Is. 26: 19).

And when you will hold within yourself this nourishment for the soul, *i.e.*, this conversation with the Lord Himself, then why would you go to the cells of the brethren, even though you may be called by someone? I tell you truly that this is idle talk and love of idleness. If you do not understand yourself, can you reason about anything else, and teach others? Be silent, be ceaselessly silent, keep always in mind the presence of God and His name. Enter into conversation with no one; but by every means guard against judging those who speak much or laugh. Be in this case deaf and dumb; no matter what may be said about you, let it pass by your ears. As your example you can take St. Stephen the New (Lives of Saints, Nov. 28), whose prayer was ceaseless, his disposition meek, his mouth silent, his heart humble, his spirit filled with tender feeling (*umileniye*), his body and soul pure, his virginity immaculate, whose true poverty and whose non-acquisitiveness were unmurmuring, his obedience thorough, his execution patient and his labor diligent.

Sitting at meals, do not look and do not judge how much anyone eats, but be attentive to yourself, nourishing your soul with prayer. At dinner eat sufficiently, at supper restrain yourself. On Wednesday and Friday, if you are able, eat once a day. Every day without fail sleep four hours at night: the 10th, 11th, and 12th, and the hour past midnight [*i.e.*, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.]; if you become weak, you can sleep more in the afternoon. Hold to this unfailingly to the end of your life: for this is necesary to give rest to your head. I, also, from my youth have held to such a path. And we always beg the Lord God to give us repose at night-time. If you will guard yourself thus, you will not be despondent but healthy and joyful.

I tell you in truth, that if you will conduct yourself thus, you will remain in the monastery without leaving to your death. Humble yourself, and the Lord will help you, *and He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the noonday* (Ps. 36), and thy *light* will *shine before men* (St. Matt. 5:16).

XLI

REPLY TO A BROTHER WHO ASKED INSTRUCTION ON LEADING AN ANCHORETIC LIFE

ONE BROTHER, when he had the intent to go away into the wilderness, came to Father Seraphim, who was living in the wilderness, and asked him: How is it, Father, that some say that going away from coenobitic life into the wilderness is Phariseeism, and that by such means one shows disdain for the brethren or even judgement of them? Father Seraphim replied to this: It is not our business to judge others, and we go away from the brotherhood not out of hatred for it, but rather because we have accepted and bear on ourselves the angelic habit, to which it is not fitting to be in a place where by word and deed the Lord God is angered. And therefore we, excluding ourselves from the brotherhood, go away only from hearing and seeing that which is opposed to God's commandments, which happens in many of the brethren. We do not flee men, who are of one nature with us and bear one and the same name of Christ; but we flee the faults which they commit, as was said also to Arsenius the Great: Flee men, and you will be saved (Lives of Saints, May 8).

One monk was blessed by the abbot to begin an anchoretic life, and the abbot wrote to Father Seraphim asking him to receive this monk and discipline him as he himself would. When this monk came with such a letter to Father Seraphim, the latter received him quite kindly, and blessed him to build another cell not so far from his own. When, however, this monk began to ask instruction of him, he told him, out of the deepest humility, that "I myself don't know anything," and he reminded him of the words of the Saviour: *Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls* (St. Matt. 11:29). Then he added: In the opinion of St. John of the Ladder, we should learn, not from an angel or a man, but from the Lord Himself.

XLII

WHAT AN ABBOT SHOULD BE

AN ABBOT SHOULD BE perfect in every virtue and have the senses of his soul trained by long schooling in the discernment of good and evil (Heb. 5:14).

An abbot should be well-versed in the Holy Scripture; he should be studying day and night in the Lord's law; through such occupations he may acquire for himself the gift of discerning good and evil.

A true understanding of good and evil may be had only when an ascetic of piety comes to a sense of the future judgement and a foretaste of eternal blessedness, which occurs in a pious soul while yet in this present earthly life, in a mysterious and spiritual manner.

Before coming to the discernment of good and evil, a man is not fit to shepherd rational sheep, but only irrational ones; because without the understanding of good and evil we cannot comprehend the workings of the evil one.

And therefore an abbot, as a pastor of rational sheep, must also have the gift of discernment, so that in each case he could give useful advice to everyone asking his instructions; for, as Peter of Damascus says (in the *Philokalia*), not every man is fit to give advice to those who seek, but he who has received from God the gift of discernment and from long experience in ascetic life has acquired a perspicacious mind.

An abbot should also have the gift of penetrativeness, so that from the consideration of things present and past he may foresee those future as well, and see through the wiles of the enemy.

The distinguishing characteristic of an abbot should be his love for those subject to him: for a genuine pastor, in the words of St. John of the Ladder, is revealed by his love for his flock. For love compelled the Supreme Pastor to be crucified on the Cross (in his Book to Pastors, chapter 5).

XLIII

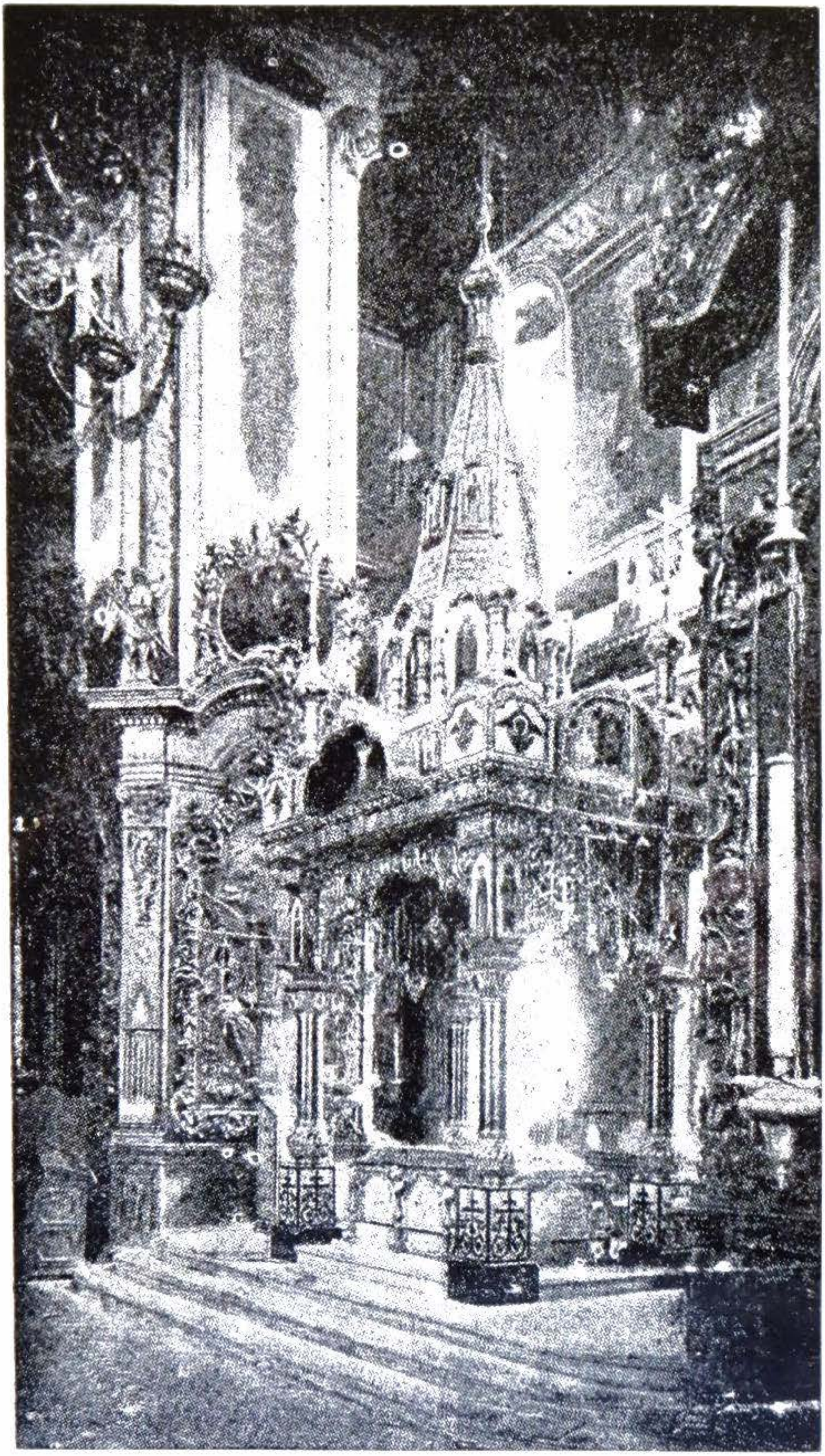
INSTRUCTION TO AN ABBOT ON HOW TO DIRECT THE BRETHREN

A CERTAIN ABBOT, being by chance in Sarov Monastery, when meeting Father Seraphim asked his advice on how to direct the brethren. Father Seraphim gave him the following instruction:

Let every abbot become and remain always in his relation to those subject to him as a wise mother.

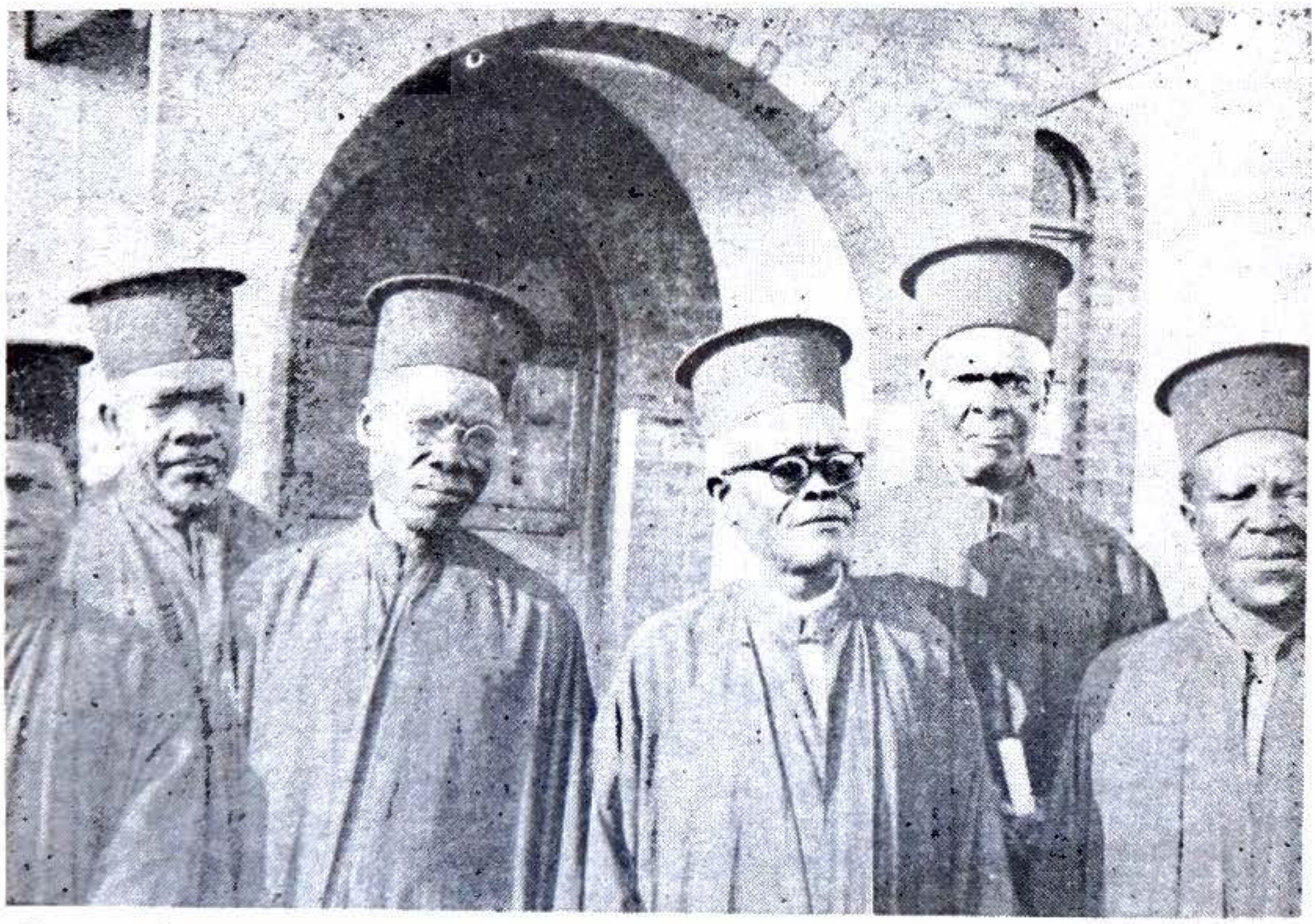
A mother who loves her children lives not to satisfy herself, but to satisfy her children. The infirmities of her infirm children she bears with love; those who have fallen into filth she cleans, washes them calmly, clothes them in new white garments, puts their shoes on, warms them, feeds them, looks after them, comforts them and from all sides strives to pacify their spirit so that she never hears the slightest cry from them; and such children are well disposed to their mother. Thus should every abbot live not to satisfy himself, but to satisfy those subject to him -- he should be condescending to their weaknesses; bear with love the infirmities of the infirm; heal their sinful diseases with the plaster of mercifulness; raise with kindness those who have fallen into transgressions; quietly cleanse those who have become sullied with the filth of some vice and wash them by placing upon them fasting and prayer above the ordinary amount which is set forth for all; clothe them, by instruction and by one's own exemplary life, in garments of virtues; keep constant watch over them, by every means comfort them, and from all sides defend their peace and repose to such an extent that the slightest cry or murmuring will never be heard from them; and then they will zealously strive to procure for the abbot peace and repose.

With this the Spiritual Instructions *of St. Seraphim ends.*
Glory to our God!



RELICS OF ST. SERAPHIM IN THE SHRINE
DONATED BY TSAR NICHOLAS II IN SAROV MONASTERY

Father Theodorous Nankyama in front of the church in which he serves on missionary trips to Tanzania (Geita district)



Some of the East African Orthodox clergy (l-r): Rev. Frs. Basilios Nsubuga, Irineos Magimbi, Athanasios Atim, Reuben Spartas, Cyrillos Pasha Kasule; Rev. Deacon Emmanuel Mulunga

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

A MISSIONARY TOUR TO FORT-PORTAL
Toro District, Uganda

By FATHER THEODOROUS NANKYAMA

A first-hand account of the everyday conditions of the Orthodox mission in East Africa, written by one of the leading figures of the Church in Uganda

IT IS TWO HUNDRED MILES from Kampala to Fort-Portal, the queen of the West of Uganda, on the Congo border. Previously we had gone to Fort-Portal with Archimandrite Chrysostomos Papasarantopoulos (the first Greek missionary to East Africa), before he left us to settle in Kenya, and we used to make this trip with him using our missionary car. But when he left us, it became much more difficult to visit the fifteen Orthodox centers in Uganda. What I did was to use some money from my own ample salary ($70 per month!) which I get as a teacher from our School, in order to visit these centers; I do all that is possible not to leave these scattered sheep without a shepherd. I hire a car, which usually costs from seven to ten dollars, according to the length of the journey. But to go to Fort-Portal I have to take a bus. This is the longest journey I have to make in Uganda, although it is very far also to the Lango District in the north; but I do not go there frequently, as there is a priest there.

Of the 200 miles from Kampala to Fort-Portal, only 70 miles is talmac; all the rest of the road is under construction. Some of our Orthodox friends helped us to buy a car in April, 1967 -- for which we are so grateful to them -- and from that time the word of God was preached unceasingly in the different villages of Uganda each Sunday. But when our Doctor came back he had to use it all the time in order to be able to visit different villages, and it was obvious that I would have to leave the car for him; thus my struggles began again.

I visit Fort-Portal once each three months, and the last time I went there was the first Sunday of December, 1968. This is a rainy period and there is always the chance of having a very muddy journey. Sometimes the bus can take two to three or more days to reach Fort-Portal or Kampala, but we were fortunate enough to have a very good trip. In the middle of the journey we met another bus coming from Fort-Portal to Kampala, and, as is their custom, the bus drivers stopped to inform each other how the road was ahead. As they were talking, the other driver saw a snake, and he slowly drove over it. Later he reversed and we could see the snake, struggling with death, with the lights of the bus; it was very large and about six feet long.

I usually leave Kampala on Friday night so that I may be in Fort-Portal the next morning in order to settle some matters concerning the School with the local Government authorities. This time I arrived exactly at 6 a.m., and it was still dark. Our Orthodox Center is on the Kampala-Fort-Portal road, about three miles from Fort-Portal, and I got off at that bus stop. Fortunately there is a shop right there, and the owner knows us all very well and is my good friend. Although I am still suffering from my old operations, I immediately carried up to the shop my three suitcases, which contain all the materials needed for the Orthodox Divine Liturgy. I took the opportunity of sitting in the veranda of the shop, since it was too early for the shopkeeper to open or for me to climb up the hill to our Center. I sat there until 7 a.m., when he opened.

But hardly had I been there five minutes when it started unexpectedly to rain heavily. All my things were safe, although strong winds caused a little water to reach me; in the meantime I looked uneasily around me, since the veranda was surrounded by grass in which snakes could move easily or hide. The rain stopped by 7 a.m. The shopkeeper found me there when he opened up, greeted me and asked me to enter. I asked him only if he could keep my suitcases until I went up to the church and asked the teacher to send people to carry them. He agreed and put them in a specially clean place. But before leaving I wanted to take some tea leaves, sugar, and bread, so that we could have breakfast up there. When the order had been made, I put my hand in my pocket to get change to pay the bill. To my surprise, all my change -- about a dollar -- was missing (the pockets of my cassock often let such heavy things slip down). I could do nothing but ask pardon and leave the things I had ordered. Of course the shopkeeper was so good as to want to give me the things and allow me to pay when the money might be

Orthodox faithful in front of the church at Fort-Portal.
The cross was overturned by the wind.

found, but since I had only a little money left for the journey, I did not want to put myself in difficulties, and so I left.

I went up the hill to our church while small drops of rain washed my head and the damp grass of the footpath made my shoes wet. When I reached the church the teacher, Mr. Daniel Kahirima, was sleeping; as it was raining, there was no chance to cultivate, and moreover it was Saturday, when all schools in Uganda are closed. Someone told him of my arrival, and so he came to the School building where I used to sleep and greeted me; he asked me right away to go to the Education Officer on the other side of town, some four miles away.

Fortunately, on our way to town a neighbor who was going to work in a Government Land Rover was kind enough to give us a lift, even though he was a member of the Full Gospel Mission, with whom we are not on good terms (because the land they wanted was given to us and not to them). He dropped us off one mile from town, and from there we went on foot through the town and another mile to the other side, to the Civic Center of the Toro District, where the District Education Officer was.

Before going there, we went to the bus depot to check whether my pocket money had been found; but it had not turned up. The teacher

insisted then that we should take some tea before going farther. We entered a small restaurant such as one could find in a town like that, and had tea with some locally-made cakes. After this we went to the Civic Center, where we were warmly received in the Office we were looking for. Our matters were all examined with sympathy. It seems that the Officers respect our work, even though our buildings and school equipment are very poor.

From there we hurried to get to the bus stop to catch the next bus going back to the side of town where our Center is located. We had fifteen minutes before the bus was due to arrive (11 a.m.), but it did not come until noon, and that one was full of people and there was no place. We waited for the next one, which came half an hour late at 1:30, but it was also full, as was the next at 2 p.m. The teacher finally decided to go on foot in order to prepare food. He fortunately saw a friend of his who was going near the School on a bicycle, and so they left.

I waited there another half an hour and tried to stop many private cars, including several police cars and Land Rovers, but no one would stop even to hear my request. Seeing there was no chance of getting a ride, I decided to go on foot. I started right off walking and had gone two miles when a bus came on its way to some villages. They were so kind as to stop and take me for a mile; and since I gave the ticket examiner a pound note and he had no change, they told me I didn't have to pay. But in checking more carefully, I found after all some other money from which I should have received change, but as I had no time to wait I tipped him and off I went, leaving a surprised ticket examiner.

Arriving at the School, I found that the teacher had already prepared food and a bed in his house, which was only half built and its walls and floor both wet. I had no appetite, and so I lay down to rest, but couldn't help thinking about the snakes that might appear any time under such favorable conditions.

At six o'clock we began the Vespers, while the sun was still shining before disappearing behind Mount Rwenzori with its white crown of perpetual snows, which separates Uganda from the Congo. There were about 80 or 100 people that evening. Unfortunately, the winds had torn away some of the iron sheets of the building, and there was no money to repair it.

After Vespers and my sermon, they were all given a chance to ask questions. The discussion was very interesting. Some of them had confession, after which we departed until the next morning. During the night it rained frogs and toads, and the winds went through the new

house just like anywhere in the forest. I was thinking not only about snakes, but also about the iron sheets which had been torn off the roof of the church by the winds, and about the School building, which has seven classrooms, the last of which, not being covered with iron sheets, was always in danger of collapsing.

The catechist and candidate for Priesthood, Mr. Peter Bagenda, has done his best to teach all the believers, young and old, to sing both in Matins and in Liturgy. Therefore the next morning (Sunday), the Liturgy was so moving and touching. Five persons were baptized during the Divine Liturgy.

After 4 p.m. I went again to sleep and slept until evening, since my health did not permit me to walk and visit some of our believers. At 7:30 I had supper and after an hour I left with some people for the main road in order to take the night bus going back to Kampala. The bus came at 9:15 and we had a rather good journey, although several times we were asked to leave the bus when going through very muddy parts of the road. We arrived in Kampala exactly at 6 a.m., very tired, but satisfied with the discussions that had taken place, with the singing, confessions, and baptisms.

Communications and contributions may be addressed to:

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A CORRECTION

In the March-April issue of *The Orthodox Word*, p. 72, it was incorrectly reported that Metropolitan Philip of the Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese of New York was one of the "celebrants" at the "Ecumenical Doxology" held on January 26 at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in New York City. The source of this error was the official text of the "Doxology" as printed in the February issue (p. 19) of the organ of the Greek Archdiocese, *The Orthodox Observer*. Metropolitan Philip has informed *The Orthodox Word* that he was *not present* at this service. In answer to our apology to him, he replied as follows:

"We thank you very much, in advance, for the correction which will appear in the May-June issue of *The Orthodox Word* in regard to our presence at the "Ecumenical Doxology" of Archbishop Iakovos.

"As far as our relations with non-orthodox are concerned, we would like to refer you to our Pastoral Edict no. 1, published on page 5 of our *Word* magazine, volume 10, December 1966. This Edict was signed by all the members of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America. We have no intentions whatsoever to violate the principles of this Edict.

"We pray that the Almighty God will crown all your efforts with success for the Glory of His Church."

[*Continued from page 96*]

one of the sick and said something to him in anger, he would leave everything, go into the storeroom, and weep. And when the other attendants of the infirmary would go in to console him and he would remain unconsolable, they would go to Father Dorotheus and say to him: "Be so kind, Father, as to go and find out what has happened with this brother: he is weeping, and we do not know why." Then Abba Dorotheus would go in to him and, finding him sitting on the ground and weeping, would say to him: "What is it, Dositheus, what is wrong with you? What are you weeping about?" Dositheus would say: "Forgive me, Father, I got angry and spoke evilly with my brother." The Father would reply to this: "So, Dositheus, you get angry and you aren't ashamed that you get angry and offend your brother? Don't you know that he is Christ and that you are offending Christ?" Dositheus would bow down his head, weeping, and answer nothing. And when Abba Dorotheus would see that he had already wept enough, he would quietly say to him: "God will forgive you. Stand up; from now on make a new beginning; let us try, and God will help." Hearing this, Dositheus would immediately stand up and joyfully hasten to his work, as if he had truly received forgiveness and advice from God. In this fashion those who served in the infirmary, having become familiar with his custom, whenever they saw him weeping would say: "Something happened with Dositheus, he has sinned again in something," and they would say to blessed Dorotheus: "Father, go to the storeroom, there is something for you to do there." And when he went in and found Dositheus sitting on the ground and weeping, he would conjecture that he had said an evil word to someone. And he would say to him: "What is it, Dositheus? Or have you offended Christ again? Or grown angry again? Aren't you ashamed? Why don't you correct yourself?" And Dositheus would continue weeping. And when Abba Dorotheus again would see that he had had his fill of weeping, he would say to him: "Stand up, may God forgive you; make a new beginning again and correct yourself at last." And Dositheus in faith would immediately throw off that sorrow and go about his work. He made the beds of the sick very well, and had such freedom in confessing his thoughts that often, when he would be making a bed and see that blessed Dorotheus was passing, he would say to him: "Father, Father, the thought says to me: you are making the beds well." And Abba Dorotheus would answer him: "O, the wonder! You've become a good slave, a distinguished bedmaker -- but are you a good monk?"

Never did Abba Dorotheus allow him to have an attachment for any kind of thing, or for whatever it might be; and everything that he said, Dositheus accepted with faith and love, and in everything eagerly obeyed him. When he would need clothing, Abba Dorotheus would give it to him to sew himself, and he would go out to sew it with great care and eagerness. And when he had finished it, the blessed one would call him and say: "Dositheus, have you sewed that garment?" He would reply: "Yes, Father, I sewed it and finished it nicely." Abba Dorotheus would say to him: "Go and give it to such a brother, or to such a sick one." He would go and give it away with joy. The blessed one again would give him another, and likewise, when he had sewed and finished it, would say to him: "Give it to this brother." He would give it away at once, and never did he grow sad or murmur, saying: "Every time when I sew and carefully finish a garment, he takes it away from me and gives it to another," but everything good that he heard he fulfilled with eagerness.

Once one of those sent on obedience outside the monastery brought a good and very beautiful knife. Dositheus took it and showed it to Father Dorotheus, saying, "Such a brother brought this knife, and I took it so as to have it, if you command, in the infirmary, because it is a good one." Blessed Dorotheus, however, never obtained anything beautiful for the infirmary, but only whatever was useful. And therefore he said to Dositheus: "Show it to me; I will see whether it is good or not." He gave it to him, saying, "Yes, Father, it is good." The Abba saw that it was indeed something good, but since he did not want Dositheus to have attachment for any kind of thing, he did not command him to carry this knife and said: "Dositheus! Do you really want to be a slave to this knife, and not a slave to God? Or do you want to bind yourself by attachment to this knife? Or are you not ashamed desiring that this knife be your master and not God?" And he, hearing this, did not raise his head, but, casting his face down, was silent. Finally, having sufficiently scolded him, Abba Dorotheus said to him: "Go and put the knife in the infirmary, and never touch it." And Dositheus so guarded himself from touching this knife that he did not dare take it even in order to give it some time to someone else, and while the other attendants would take it, he alone would not touch it. And he never asked: "Am I not also the same as all the others?" but everything that he heard from the Father he fulfilled with joy.

THUS HE SPENT the brief time of his stay in the monastery, for he lived there only five years, and died in obedience, at no time and in nothing having done his own will and having done nothing out of attachment. And when he fell ill and began to spit blood (from which he died), he heard from someone that underboiled eggs were good for those spitting blood. This was known also to blessed Dorotheus, who was concerning himself with his treatment, but, because he had so many things to do, this remedy didn't enter his mind. Dositheus said to him: "Father, I wish to tell you that I have heard of something good for me, but I do not wish you to give it to me, because the thought of it is troubling me." Dorotheus answered him: "Tell me, child, what thing is this?" He answered him: "Give me your word that you will not give it to me, because, as I said, the thought disturbs me over this." Abba Dorotheus said to him: "All right, I will do as you wish." Then the sick one said to him: "I heard from some that underboiled eggs are good for someone spitting blood; but for the Lord's sake, if it please you, what you didn't give me before this of yourself, do not give me now for the sake of my thought." The Abba replied to him: "All right, if you do not wish it, I will not give it to you; only do not be distressed." And he tried to give him other medicines useful for him in place of the eggs, for Dositheus had said before that the thought was disturbing him regarding eggs. Behold how he labored to cut off his own will, even in such an illness.

He had always, in addition, remembrance of God, for Abba Dorotheus had commanded him to say constantly: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me," and also: "Son of God, help me": thus he was always uttering this prayer. And when his illness became quite severe, the blessed one said to him: "Dositheus, take care over the prayer, see that you be not deprived of it." He answered: "Very well, Father, only pray for me." Again, when he became still worse, the blessed one said to him: "Well, Dositheus, how is the prayer, does it continue as before?" He answered him: "Yes, Father, by your prayers." When, however, it became extremely difficult for him and the illness became so severe that he had to be carried on a stretcher, Abba Dorotheus asked him: "How is the prayer, Dositheus?" He answered: "Forgive me, Father, I cannot keep it up any longer." Then Abba Dorotheus said to him: "And so leave off the prayer, only keep God in mind and represent Him to yourself as if He were before you."

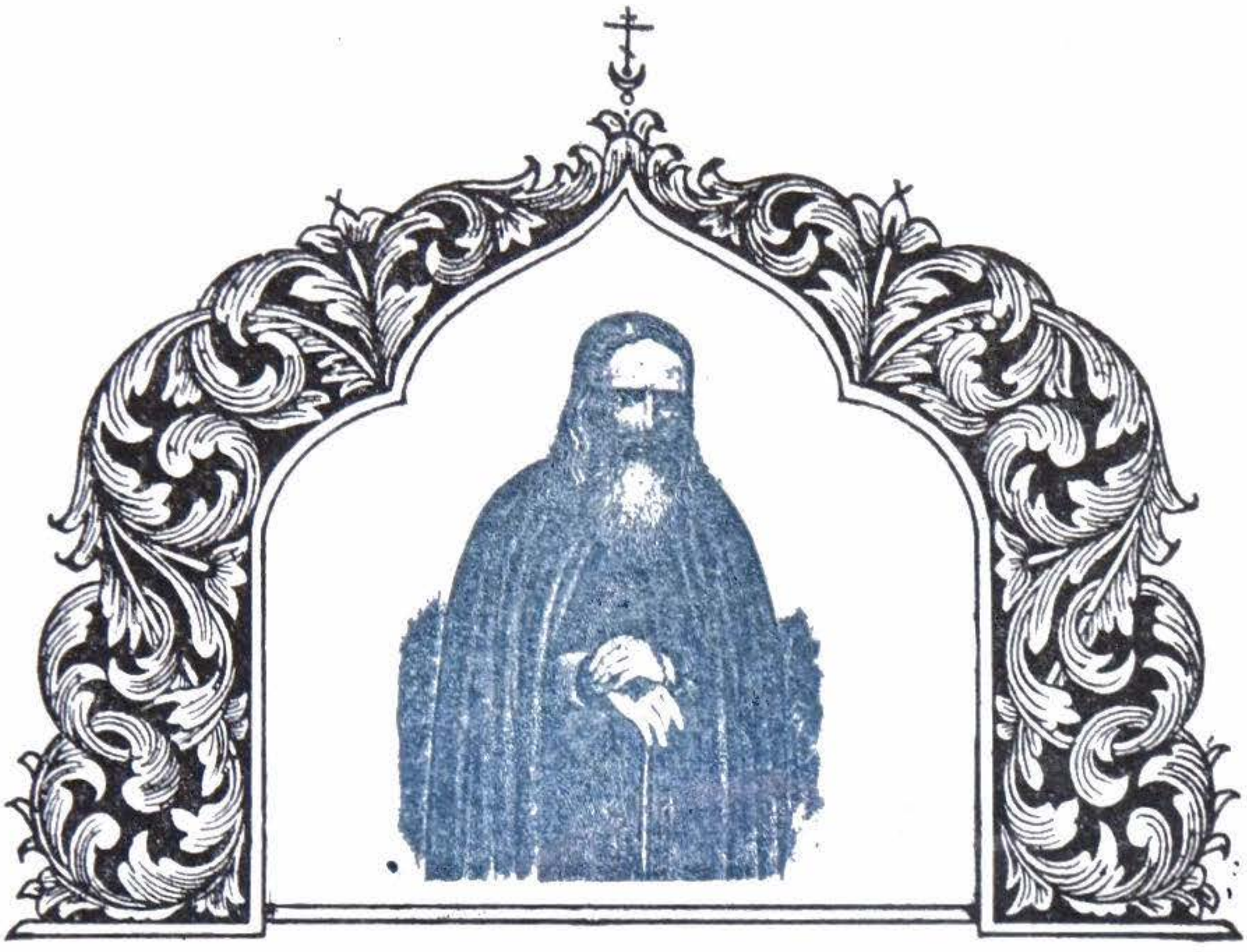
Suffering terribly, Dositheus informed the great Elder (Barsanophius) of this, saying: "Let me go, I cannot bear any more." To this the Elder answered him: "Have patience, child, for the mercy of God is near." Blessed Dorotheus, however, seeing that he suffered so terribly, grieved over this, fearing lest his mind be injured. Within a few days Dositheus again informed the Elder concerning himself, saying: "My Master, I cannot live any longer"; then the Elder answered him: "Go, child, in peace, stand before the Holy Trinity and pray for us."

Hearing this reply of the Elder, the brethren began to be indignant and say: "What did he do that was special, or what kind of ascetic exploit did he perform, that he should hear these words?" For, indeed, they had not seen that Dositheus had especially labored in asceticism, or eaten food every other day, as did some of those who were there, or that he had kept vigil beyond the usual Vigil service,-- and as for the Vigil itself he did not get up for the beginning; likewise they did not see that he had had any special abstinence, but on the contrary they noticed that if by chance the sick would leave a little gravy or fish heads, or anything like that, he would eat it. And there were monks there who, as I have said, for a long time ate every other day and doubled their vigils and abstinence. These latter, hearing that the Elder had sent such a reply to the youth, who had been in the monastery only five years, were disconcerted, not knowing his deeds and his undoubted obedience in everything, that he had never done his own will in anything, that if blessed Dorotheus at some time had chanced to say something making fun of him, and seeming to indicate that he should do something, he promptly went and did it without thinking. For example, in the beginning by habit he spoke loudly; blessed Dorotheus, making fun of him, once told him: "Perhaps you could use some wine and bread, Dositheus? All right, go and get some wine and bread." He, hearing this, went and brought a cup with wine and bread and gave it to him in order to receive his blessing. Abba Dorotheus, not understanding this, looked at him with wonder and said: "What do you want?" He replied: "You ordered me to get some wine and bread, so give me your blessing." Then he said: "Fool, since you yell like the Goths, who yell when they get angry while drinking, I told you to get some wine and bread, for you are as loud as a Goth." And Dositheus, hearing this, bowed down and took back what he had brought.

Once he likewise came to ask Abba Dorotheus concerning a phrase of Holy Scripture, for because of his purity he had begun to understand the Holy Scripture. Blessed Dorotheus, however, did not want him to devote himself to this, but rather to guard himself the better by means of

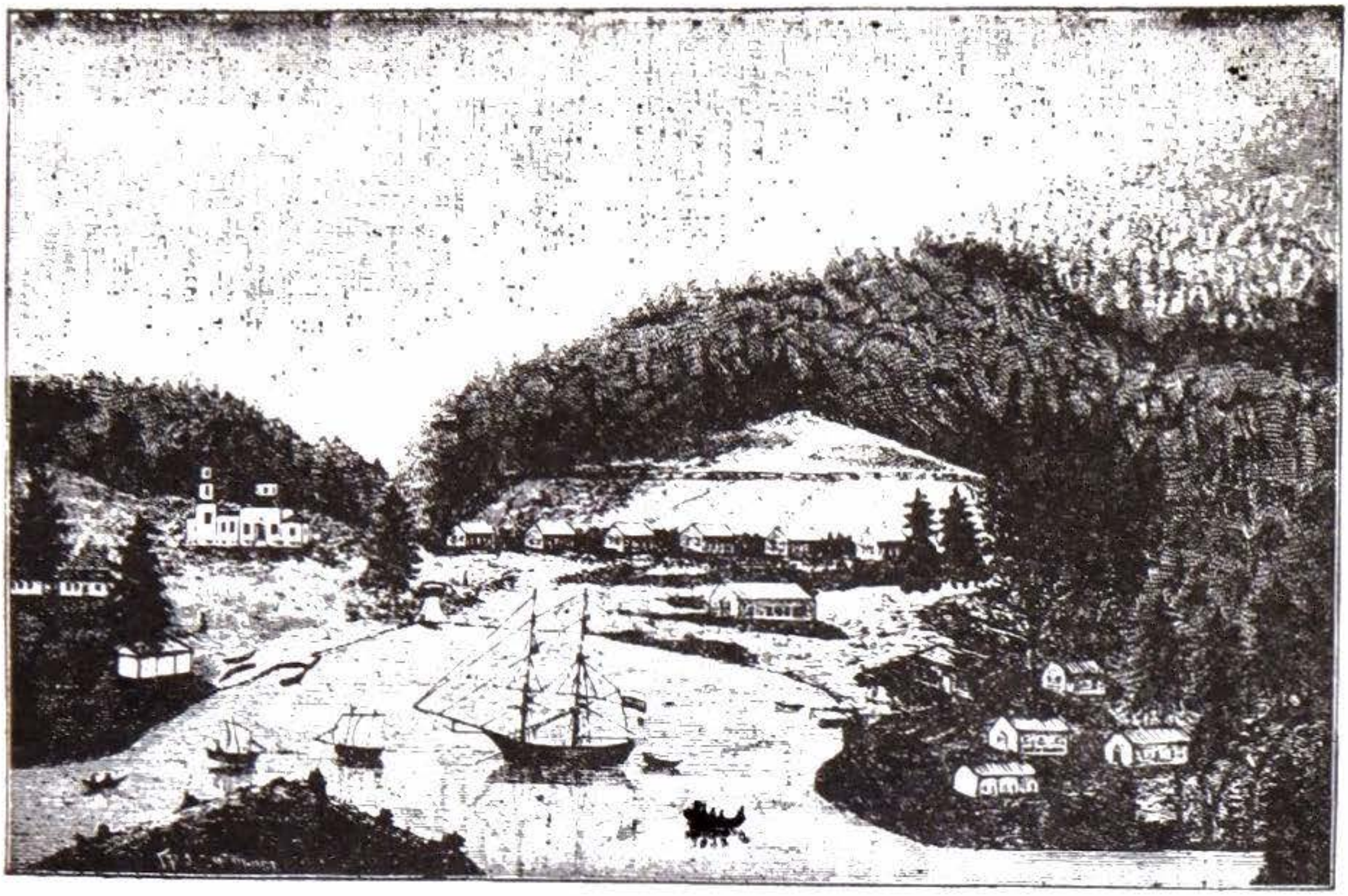
humility. And so, when Dositheus asked him, he answered: "I don't know." But Dositheus, not understanding his father's intent, came again to him and asked him concerning another chapter. Then he said to him: "I don't know, but go ask the Father Abbot," and Dositheus went, without thinking anything in the least. Abba Dorotheus, however, told the Abbot in advance: "If Dositheus comes to you to ask about something in Scripture, hit him a little." And thus when he came and asked the Abbot, the latter began to push him, saying: "Why don't you sit quietly in your cell and and be silent, when you don't know anything? How do you dare ask about such subjects? Why don't you concern yourself with your own impurity?" And having said to him a few other things like this, the Abbot sent him away, having given him also two light blows on the cheeks. Dositheus, returning to Abba Dorotheus, showed him his cheeks, which had become red from the blows, and said: "Here's what I received for an answer." But he did not say to him: "Why did you not teach me yourself, instead of sending me to the Abbot?" He said nothing of the sort, but he accepted everything with faith and did it without thinking. And when he would ask Abba Dorotheus concerning some kind of thought, he would accept what he heard with such assurance and so observe it that he would not ask a second time concerning the same thought.

And thus, not understanding, as I said, this wondrous doing, certain of the brethren murmured over what was said to Dositheus by the great Elder. And when God wished to reveal the glory prepared for him because of his holy obedience, and likewise the gift for the salvation of souls which blessed Abba Dorotheus possessed, even though he was still a disciple, in being enabled so truly and quickly to place Dositheus before God: a short time after the blessed repose of Dositheus, the following happened: A certain great elder who came from another place to the brethren who were there in the coenobia of Abba Seridos, conceived a desire to see the previously departed holy Fathers of this monastery and prayed God that He would reveal them to him. And he saw them all together, standing as in a choir, and in their midst was a certain youth. The Elder later asked: "Who is that youth whom I saw amidst the holy Fathers?" And when he described the features of his face, all recognized that it was Dositheus, and they glorified God, being astonished, since he came from such a life and such a previous dwelling, at what height he was enabled to attain in such a short time by virtue of the fact that he had obedience and cut off his own will. For them all let us give glory to God Who loves mankind, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.



A Century of Veneration of
FATHER HERMAN

THE VENERATION OF THE God-pleasing monk of Valaam Monastery, Blessed Father Herman, began in Valaam exactly thirty years after his death, which, like his death itself and the fact that he would be forgotten for thirty years, had been predicted by the Blessed one himself. To his disciple, the Aleut Ignaty Aligyage, he said: "Thirty years will pass after my death, everyone living now on Spruce Island will die, you alone will remain alive and will be old and poor, and then they will remember me." Father Herman died in the year 1837, and in 1867 the first collection of information about him was made by the venerable Abbot of Valaam, Damaskin, and on the 13th of December, the anniversary of Father Herman's death, it was read to the



St. Paul's Harbor, Kodiak, as it appeared during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. (From Yanovsky's description, painted by his daughter)

brethren of Valaam, who solemnly marked his memory. This information was issued in a small book in 1868, which became his first biography. The notes of another disciple of his, who was later to become Schema-monk Sergy (he had been Simeon Yanovsky in the world) are a chief source of information on the life and ascetic labors of the Blessed one. They are included in the basic work on Father Herman: *Outline of the History of the American Orthodox Mission*, published in Valaam Monastery in 1894.

In Alaska, where Father Herman spent over forty years of his life, his memory is revered as sacred. In the words of Archpriest Alexander Popov, who spent five years there in his function of Secretary of the Committee for collecting testimony of the miracles of Father Herman, his miracles were numerous -- "I heard more than a hundred testimonies of Father Herman's help." This definitely testifies of the sanctity of the Alaskan missionary and of his great veneration in Alaska. In Russia, on the other hand, before the Revolution of 1917 he was placed on the list of great Russian ascetics and candidates for canonization. In the *Theological Encyclopedia* published in 1903 the judgement of the Church in

general regarding Father Herman was expressed thus: "...His life is reminiscent of the ancient desert dwellers,-- he was in communion with the world of spirits and with nature: he fed with his own hands ermine, bears, birds, who approached him with trust, reminiscent of the primeval condition in paradise. His memory is surrounded by an aureole of sanctity." Already in 1902, in the Orthodox calendar published in New York by the Mutual Aid Society, a considerable article is devoted to Father Herman, wherein he is presented as "awaiting only his formal declaration as a saint." It is apparently also from this time that there have existed a quite successfully composed troparion and kontakion.

After the Revolution all Church-administrative work was interrupted, in Russia completely, and in America for whole decades, as compared with the rushing torrent of fruitful activity in the years preceding the Revolution. In 1935 the Alaskan missionary, Archimandrite Gerasim Schmaltz, who was tonsured in the Kaluga Monastery of St. Tikhon in Russia, settled in the place where the Blessed Herman had lived on Spruce Island. His completely solitary and selfless service to Father Herman's memory has preserved to the present day the shrine with his relics (preserved in the form of bones, like the relics of St. Seraphim of Sarov), as well as several things belonging to Father Herman: his *klobuk*, chains, and cross. Alas, today there are very few who actively venerate Father Herman.

The canonization of Father Herman of blessed memory has already, in essence, long been accomplished through his local veneration by the people. In 1939 the Russian Church Outside of Russia in America, under the presidency of Metropolitan Theophilus (Pashkovsky), began the Church's canonization of Father Herman, as is witnessed by the "Official Record, no. 1, of the session of the Council of Bishops of the 15th (28th) of September, 1939, in the city of New York":

"His Eminence the Metropolitan placed for discussion the question on the agenda concerning the canonization of Father Herman. The report of Bishop Alexy of the Aleutians and Alaska was read. After discussion of the question it was decreed:

"a. To approve the report of Bishop Alexy concerning the canonization of Father Herman;

"b. To entrust to a Committee, composed of three: Archbishop Tikhon [Troitsky, of San Francisco], Bishop Alexy, and Bishop Leonty, the investigation of the life and miracles of Father Herman, inviting at their discretion a number of laymen to participate on the Committee:

"c. To issue a Life of Father Herman; and

"d. To publish in the Church periodical press material on Father Herman and his miracles."

In the same year a discussion concerning this was made in Sremski-Karlovtzy under the presidency of the First Hierarch of the entire Russian Church Outside of Russia, Metropolitan Anastassy. This matter was apparently hindered by the war. According to Archimandrite Gerasim (Schmaltz), Bishop Alexy collected much very valuable information concerning Father Herman's life and wrote down many testimonies of miraculous signs from him, but he soon left for the USSR and apparently took all the material with him. In any case there has been no trace of this material. After the war, at the beginning of the '50's, new attempts to gather material were undertaken among the residents of Alaska, and although much was apparently collected this time also (as Rev. Alexander Popov states), it likewise has remained unpublished to this day. Unfortunately, from the Church periodical press one may draw a very insignificant amount of information. In these there are many inaccuracies, much that is unverified.

In the matter of the local Church canonization of Fr. Herman, the late Archbishop John Maximovitch of blessed memory (of Western America and San Francisco) labored much. Himself a zealous reverer of Father Herman, he blessed in 1963 in San Francisco the foundation of the Brotherhood of Blessed Father Herman of Alaska, which set as its aim to spread by means of the printed word spiritual literature in English and Russian, and at the same time to inform the Orthodox and non-Orthodox people concerning Father Herman. Blessing this work, he wrote: "May the Lord bless the preaching of the Orthodox Word. Christ commanded His disciples, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* May this preaching serve for the strengthening of true Orthodox faith and Christian life in North America, with the help and the prayers of Blessed Father Herman of Alaska, whose sanctity was manifested on this continent, and the Aleut Martyr Peter, who suffered martyrdom in San Francisco." Since 1965 the Brotherhood has published a bimonthly magazine in English, *The Orthodox Word*, and since 1967 the *Pravoslavny Blagovestnik* in Russian. Likewise with the blessing of Archbishop John the Brotherhood has been collecting hagiographical material for the compiling of a complete life and miracles of Father Herman, some portion of which has already been published in the Church press. As the Brotherhood's first

separate publication in English, a short Life and first collection of verified miracles of Father Herman has come out under the title, *Father Herman, Alaska's Saint*, by F. A. Golder. A complete biography in Russian will be issued next, followed by an English translation of it.

Every year Archbishop John triumphantly marked the day of Father Herman's commemoration. On the day of Father Herman's death, December 13, and on the commemoration days of the Wonderworkers of Valaam, Sts. Sergius and Herman, Archbishop John would come to the bookstore of the Brotherhood in lesser vestments, with servers carrying the dikirion and trikirion, and celebrate a panikhida before the icon of Father Herman, after which the "Magnification" of Father Herman would be sung. Then Vladika would raise the icon high over his head and carry it into the Cathedral next door, where during the singing by the Cathedral choir of the troparion to Father Herman, he would place it on a stand to the left of the side altar of St. Nicholas, and the faithful would venerate the icon, in which Father Herman is represented like a canonized Saint, in a halo.

The question of the official canonization of Blessed Father Herman was examined by the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia at their meeting of March 20-22 of this year at the New Kursk Icon Hermitage at Lake Mahopac, New York. It was decided to consult all hierarchs of the Russian Church Outside of Russia concerning the order of canonization and to proceed with the preparation of a Life and Service. After this session of the Synod, a Litia (brief memorial service) was served for Father Herman and the "Magnification" was sung to him (as to a canonized saint).

It is therefore to be expected that Father Herman will soon be officially canonized, becoming the second Saint to be canonized by the Russian Church Outside of Russia since the Revolution, the first being St. John of Kronstadt (1964). Thus St. Herman will become the Patron and Protector of true Orthodox Christians in the New World.

Blessed Father Herman, pray to God for us!

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[*Continued from page 81*]

by the pure Mary, of whom before this He had said that *Mary hath chosen the good part* (St. Luke 10: 42); neither did He reject the kissing of His feet by the sinful woman who offered, from possessions she had collected in an impure way, a sacrifice pleasing to God -- myrrh, mixed with tears of repentance.

I am rich in spices, but poor in virtues, what I have I offer Thee; do Thou also Thyself give what Thou hast, and loosen and forgive, she cried to Christ (Canon of Compline on Great Tuesday).

The myrrh I have is corruptible, the myrrh Thou hast is life, resounded in her soul (*Ibid.*).

And in fact, instead of corruptible riches the Lord bestowed on her an incorruptible gift -- He forgave her many sins and raised up her soul, deadened by sins, as He raised up Lazarus from the grave after four days.

Still more did He reward and glorify the Myrrh-bearing Women who were faithful to Him, for to them He first appeared and through them announced His Resurrection to the Apostles and the whole world.

Thus the Lord remains a debtor to none, and bestows gifts incomparably better than those offered to Him.

Remember, O Lord, those who bring forth fruit and do good in Thy Holy Churches and remember the poor, bestow upon them Thy rich heavenly gifts, the Holy Church prays while offering the Bloodless Sacrifice.

Grant them heavenly in place of earthly, eternal in place of temporal, incorruptible in place of corruptible (Eucharistic Canon of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great).

In offering something as a gift to God, whether it be a sacrifice to Church or help to the poor, in reality we do not give, but receive.

If we give material treasures, we shall receive in good time spiritual gifts in the measure of our zeal.

The magnitude of our gift to God is determined in His eyes not by its amount and cost, but by the inclination of our heart.

Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: for all of these have of their abundance cast in into the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had, said the Lord of the widow who gave two mites in the Temple (St. Luke 21: 3-4, St. Mark 12: 41-44).

Thus our gifts, too, have a value before God in so far as to them is joined our love for God, prayers, and heartfelt repentance over our sins.

THE HOLY MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN

All our material gifts the Lord accepts only as outward manifestations of our inward inclination before Him; He accepts them in the same way as every other outward expression of love for Him and worship of Him.

Therefore, go ye all boldly to Christ, offer gifts to Him, each one what he can, imitate the Myrrh-bearing Women, both ye who stand on the path of righteousness and ye who are fallen in the abyss of sins.

Offer Him burning prayers and repentance from the depths of your heart, and let the outward expression of these be gifts to the Church, which is the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23, Col. 1:24), aid to His least brethren (St. Matt. 25:40), the adornment of churches, the kissing of icons and other holy objects.

The Lord accepts each gift of ours to the Church as fragrant myrrh; he does not reject our tears and kisses, but for them bestows remission of many sins to those who have loved much.

We should be concerned only that our gift may be truly a pure gift to God, that in our feelings there be no vainglory or pride, disdain or hatred for our neighbors, and likewise that every eagerness be shown that our gift be pleasing to God, lest we resemble those who said to Christ, "Rejoice," in mockery of Him.

Sacrifices are not pleasing to God when they are offered with cold calculation, when, having the possibility to offer better, we offer worse (Malach. 1:8, 14), when we strive not to do something useful for the Church or our neighbors, but what will be just what we want.

Abominable before Him also is the kissing of holy objects when it is done with lips that testify that our attention is directed upon our outward side, and what is more by lips that sully the holy objects.

Not forgiveness but judgement is offered by such a prostration to God!

Let us purify ourselves, brethren, from every filth of flesh and spirit, let us light the candles of our souls with love of poverty, not devouring each other with slander (Stikhira of Friday of Cheese-Fare Week), and all the more *let us purify our senses*, and then with our hearts *we shall behold Christ, radiant with the inaccessible light of the Resurrection, and shall hear Him saying clearly, Rejoice! as we sing the hymn of victory* over our sins.

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FATHER HERMAN

Alaska's Saint

BY F. A. GOLDER

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